Today on the girl to find show, we are talking about not settling for a guy who doesn't truly love God, and you may be thinking, OK, well, how do I know? How do I know if he loves God? How do? I know if he's just like taking. Me for a ride and he just wants something specific or he's rushing forward in this, like, how do I know Chris and I are both going to share our stories. I mean, I remember settling. I remember deep in my heart. Knowing when I was in a specific relationship, I knew like deep in my heart, I knew there were issues. I knew there were problems, but I was shoving them under the surface. I was denying the wisdom of others. Because I wanted what I wanted, I'll go into more detail in that in just a minute, but I promise you by the end of this episode, if you are in a relationship or you know someone who's in a relationship that is not truly. God, honoring that isn't like. It's just got problems and you're struggling to admit it. You're gonna have wisdom by the end of this to discern and to know what steps to take to know if you should. Start like seeking wisdom. Maybe you should break up, like if you're feeling nervous about that. We are going to unpack practical steps, practical info to know what to look for to know how to take steps forwards. In this you're gonna feel encouraged. You're gonna feel inspired and. Ultimately, you're gonna have wisdom to know what to do with your relationship. Stick with us. Let's jump in.

Hey, sister hood. It is Kristen and Bethany here, and I am so glad you're joining us for this episode. After the intro, if you are a married woman right now, you might be thinking, OK, I'm going to. Tune out cause. This isn't for me, but don't go anywhere because. Sweat. You have single sisters in your life, in your church, in your community. I bet you have friends that are single. Maybe you even have biological sisters or a sister who is single and they need your wisdom. They need your. Help none of us. Are meant to walk through this life alone, and one of the things we're going to get to later is how valuable input and wisdom. Is for single women in relationships navigating that tricky process. How valuable and crucial it is that they have people speaking into their lives, even if you're speaking things they don't want to hear. But it's truth, and they need it. So stick around because I think you're gonna find this really helpful and you are gonna walk away feeling equal. To know how to better speak into the lives of your single sisters. And if you're single and you're like, well, I'm not even in a relationship. This doesn't relate to me. Do not go anywhere either, because if you have any desire or thought that you might get married someday, even if you're a teen and you're listening, you're like, yes, someday I might be in a romantic relationship. Well, guess what? You need to Start learning now what it looks like to pursue. A godly relationship and not settle, not fall for a guy because of infatuation and you're swooning and everything seems like Disney magical. You need to know what to actually look for and. Even now, how to avoid some of those red flags, right? So stick around because there's going to be wisdom for you. And of course, if you're the sister who is in a relationship, then this is 100% for you. If you are even questioning like like I don't know, is this the best relationship? Is this God honoring is this healthy? You know, what does God have to say about this? I do have some some concerns. How do I know if there are big red flags or just yellow flags? Or maybe I only see green flags? How do I know? We're gonna talk about that, and we're gonna help you discern whether or not you are set. If you guys haven't heard about our book love defined for any of you single married or in a relationship, this is an incredible resource because it is all about embracing God's vision for lasting love and satisfying relationships. A lot of the things we're going to talk about in this episode, not settling red flags, we unpack in this book, and we really help you whether you're married or single. To gain a big vision of God's eyes, biblical vision of what true Love Actually looks like. And this is something you can take into every stage. Every season of life, so if you're like, yeah, I've kind of heard about love defined or I have a friend who's reading it, or maybe you own a copy, but you haven't started it yet. We encourage you if you walk away with nothing else from this episode. Except I'm gonna go read love to find. Do that because this book is packed with wisdom that, quite honestly, I wish I had had when I was a teen, when I was a 20 something when I was in. The the dating era of my life. I wish I had this because it would have been such a huge help. So basically Bethany and I wrote all the things we wish we had known a long time ago. So please grab this copy for yourself. For a friend. You can find it all at. Scroll to find.com/shop so going back in time, Bethany said she remembered a time where she was settling. I also remember a time in my life where I was dating a guy I shared this whole story and loved to find, but everything seemed pretty good at first. You know, I I was intentionally involving my parents like I wanted their input. I wanted input of my. Like friends and my sisters. Like. OK. Yeah. Like I want people to be involved in this. But I remember seeing and noticing things in the relationship that were red flag. But quite honestly, I was so like I wanted the relationship to work so bad that I was ignoring those red flags and I was dismissing them as like, OK, not a big deal, right. And I just, I'm like this guy. He has so many other great things going for him. I'm sure these red flags don't really matter. We're gonna talk about in a little bit what some of those were, but for me it's like. Deep in my heart, as the relationship went on, I knew that there were issues. I knew there were red flags. I knew there were things about this relationship that we're not honoring to God. But I didn't want to admit it. I didn't want to say it out loud and deep in my heart. I knew in many ways I was settling like I just knew this wasn't going to be eventually a marriage that would really be, I think, God's best for me and like the picture of marriage that he displays in scripture. And so thankfully someone who loves me very much, my mom. She was willing to be brave and bold and speak hard truths into my life. In fact, it was really close to right before I got engaged, so. So talk about a hard time, but I think my mom loving me so much was like, and my dad like, they were both feeling like, ohh there. There are these red flags. Someone needs to say something. She's close to getting engaged. Like if we don't. Say it now. And at least share our concerns. They felt like they would have regrets. You know, they they felt like they had to at least share these. These observations, and so they did. And my mom came to me late one night. And you know, I was already feeling a lot of those same reservations, but I had never verbalized them. And she just said, like, hey, can I share some things with you and. What I did not want to hear it. I I wasn't like yes, Mom, please speak wisdom into my relationship. I wanna hear your concerns. I was like, Nope. I don't wanna hear it. Everything's fine. Like literally at that point, I was still trying to shove it under the rug. I didn't want to admit that I was settling in a lot of ways. And so by God's grace, he helped me to get over myself and have a humble heart. And I said, OK, I'll listen. But I was like, still mad about it. Like, true honesty here. And so my mom was just like, still. So. Bold like. OK. Hey, she's. She's like, she's listening. So she shared and just kind of listed a few things. Like I've noticed this, you know, this other area is really concerning. I don't know if you've thought anything about this. Like she just listed a couple of things. Every single thing she listed was exactly what I was already feeling concerned about on the inside, but had not expressed outwardly to anyone. And so for me, in that moment, I just honestly like I broke down in. Tears like this? Light bulb moment of my mom is like very wise, very godly woman. She sees me, she knows me. She's been walking with me in this, and she's pointing out the very things. I'm already concerned about like now I have a choice like Biblically, am I going to listen? To wisdom or. Dismiss it. And just like, walk my own path. So by God's grace, I did listen, and that relationship did end and I wouldn't be married to my now husband Zach, who is an incredible godly man. If I had not listened to that wisdom. So I am so grateful. I did not settle, but you might be in that place where you're wondering. And you're like, I don't know if I need someone.

To speak some wisdom into my life. OK, so we're all wondering. I know Christian and I sound the exact same. So. Wait, what? That's about anymore? Just think to voices. Yeah, this is. Bethany, you can talk really high.

I could talk really low.

I don't know. That doesn't sound right for you. OK. So you were kind of vague on, OK, well, we're gonna get to specifics, but everyone wants to know for you. Yeah. You were seeing when you were when you were there. Like, we'll get into other specifics. But for you, when you were there and you were in that relationship and you were like, you kind of knew deep in your heart there were some issues.

A little bit on purpose because I know. We're going to. Get into some of those specifics.

And then Mom started bringing those up. Can you just share, like, not being like, ohh. He was terrible, but a few of those things, like, what did that actually? Look like can you just share a little bit of that because that's what. We all wanna know, right?

Now, OK, let's go as you're talking. We're. Like, yes, tell me the.

Please. Yeah, the juice.

You know, I was going to bring it later, but I'll bring it now. So there's a few of the things one that I think we can often dismiss as not being a very big deal, but it honestly is because I think it really speaks to the integrity of the person. And that was that this particular relationship, the guy that I was dating. Would say a lot of really great. Even biblical things or say like, yeah, I'm gonna do this like things he was committing to, whether in his life, just like, work stuff or even spiritual stuff. He would say a lot of things. And it would. Sound really good. Like, wow, this guy's going places. Wow, this guy really loves the Lord, but then as time went on, I noticed that the follow through the actual implementation. Doing the things that he very passionately said he was gonna do. There wasn't as much of that, and even things like you know, he would talk about being so passionate about reading the word and then, you know, we might have a conversation a few. Weeks later, like. Hey, how's that going for you? Like I haven't really been doing it. And so for me, it was like, oh, like, that was a red flag. As I saw it wasn't just like, yeah, we all have inconsistencies. We're not saying any guy needs to be perfect. None of us are. But things that we're you know, when we're dating, we're evaluating. Do I want to spend the rest of my life with this guy? Is he a guy who truly, genuinely. Loves the Lord and one of the things for me was like I wanted to marry a man who did what he said he was going to do and at least really attempted to follow through again. Not perfectly, but like you see, a consistent pattern and what I started seeing over time was an inconsistent pattern, enough to where it was becoming a concern and it was something that my mom was also noticing. And something I was noticing but didn't want to say anything. And this wasn't just like a few weeks like this was month after month. This was going on. And so that I I look back now and see that as being a very big red flag. Because you know, I can think, oh, we're just dating. You know, when we get married, it'll be different. We're the same people on either end of the aisle like, and probably we're.

Typically trying to put our best foot forward when we're dating, I hear from very few couples who are like, wow, they just transformed. Yeah, they're now the Prince Charming. It's like typically goes downhill after you get married. Like if you're having issues already. So I feel like, you know, he was giving you the best of the. Best and it was already an issue.

Right.

Yeah. Yeah. Another area that was that was becoming concerning was just the sexual temptation and compromise. Nothing major in the relationship, but things where again, he would say I really value this. I value you. I wanna protect you even in, you know, the standpoint of purity and morality. Like I want our relationship to be honoring to God, in and out. But then it's like behind the scenes. Just as time went on, he would just do things where I'm like, I don't know if that's like the most. Honoring like he just, I felt like he wasn't trying to uphold the integrity of our relationship morally, but always pushing the limits, if that makes sense. Just like pushing the boundary, pushing the boundary, getting as close to the edge without crossing the line. And as time went on, that was just like I didn't want to admit it because of course, when you're dating, it's like, oh, you wanna be close and physically, like, that's natural. But there are lines where God saying like, this isn't honoring to me this isn't holy. This isn't pure. You need to protect this. And then when you get married, obviously it's like, OK, the wonderful enjoyment of all of those good blessings. But I just didn't feel like this particular. I was really trying to honor the Lord in our relationship. He wasn't leading well in that and over time that did become concerning. So those are, I would say, the other thing.

I remember very clearly.

Oh, I thought of 1. Other thing.

OK. OK, maybe.

You were? Yeah, cuz you were walking with us and you had concerns like as my sister.

I mean, as I it's hard for me to. Remember now, but I do. I remember the UM like very I guess very bothered. But he was he would get start to get very bothered by.

I know it's a long time ago.

Some discomfort or being like inconvenienced in any way and it. Was just like really like. Come on, you know.

Yeah, I don't. Yeah, it's that's like a tough one, cause it's not like, ohh, it's a moral issue where I don't know, even like, biblically how to categorize it. But it was kind of this consistent pattern. Just I don't know, like.

Being very self focused.

Just I guess that would be a good way to. Put it it did feel like it was over time. Just a very self focused perspective where. It felt like. His comfort, his needs him not being inconvenienced in any way, not being bothered, even by children. I remember instances where it's like, really bothered by kids just being kids and like.

Like our younger siblings, he would start to get really annoyed at them and it was.

Yeah, yeah.

Just, I mean, they're probably annoying, but like. You know, just like you.

Wanna. Yeah, like a man who is more long-suffering, persevering, like, not necessarily, like complaining about little things or just showing patience and kindness even to children who can't be annoying. Like there was a consistent pattern of that not being the case. And that was another thing. Over time that I didn't want to admit was there, but it.

Really was and you know. Not that you wanna be the one where it's like I am the queen in the relationship, but I feel like both people should be striving to like Outserve the other and out love the other. And towards the end, it felt like, you know, he was most concerned with himself and like, you kind of took the backseat, like, well, what about me? Like it would like, he would take care of his comfort, but. Then like kind of forget. About you and it you know those sorts of things. That's why I think these it can. It can almost seem like well, is this really that big of a deal? But when you take, you know, and there's more, we can unpack it when you take just those things. Yeah, I'm like, and, you know, like, OK, and I'll I'll lay them out there, write them all out. It's like those are not good patterns. Those are not good. Like we were we're seeing these month after month. Like those aren't things you wanna take into, you know, a future. I mean, we both have kids now and they are very inconvenient all of the time. And you know, they don't. They choose to have that attitudes at the most inconvenient time and like, if that's, you know, and so it's like obviously we're not perfect, but you want to strive to have the patience of Christ and like, ask God to help you with that. And just, I don't know, like, you want to.

It's never convenient.

Be with a man who says, like I see Jesus. I see that he came not to be served, but to serve. I'm very imperfect, but I want to live that way. I want to live a humble life. I want to be about Jesus truly, and not just saying that. But you actually see that in the little decisions.

MM.

Because a lot of little decisions. Yeah, big decision, you know, and something that.

Align that. I want you to take home. Write it down. Memorize it is so. Helpful in all of this is to say, is for you as a woman, a woman who is not married, pursuing a relationship, you know thinking, OK, is this man godly? You're not looking for perfection. You're looking for direction. And this is something we have said many times here at girl to find you're not looking for perfection. You're looking for direction. And what we mean by that is obviously no man or woman. None of us are going to walk. Anything perfectly. So you're not looking for a man who's upholding every single biblical character quality 100%, but you're looking for direction is he move. Living in the biblical direction, am I seeing a pattern of moving toward biblical truth, biblical character, biblical godliness, biblical purity? Is he moving and striving faithfully in that direction? Do I see that it's not perfection? Is it direction? And I think that can be really helpful. And as we evaluate that and step back and go, yeah, no guys, perfect. But in this relationship I am not seeing a direction of moving. Toward the word toward truth. Toward integrity, morality, purity, loving God with his whole heart, that sacrificial love. I'm not seeing that. In fact, I'm seeing the other direction, like the opposite. And so to you, I think that can be a very big red flag, a warning of. If you keep, if you keep moving forward in this relationship, in the end, what's gonna happen, you're either gonna end up with a terrible heartbreak, which is what I went through, and Bethany went through because we were, you know, sometimes you gotta just you gotta walk the road to even know. And so yeah, a heartbreak in the end is better than settling than saying I'm just gonna marry him cuz I don't want to go through the heartbreak. I don't want to. Experience that rather than a short amount. Short term emotional pain. You're gonna walk into a life of emotional pain being married to someone who doesn't truly, genuinely love the Lord. And is it moving in a direction toward the Lord. So it's better to have the heart break up now than like the lifelong pain of being in that. But I just want to say a quick side note. If you are married to someone and you might feel regretful, you might feel like he doesn't love the Lord. Maybe he's not a believer and you feel like that decision to marry him wasn't a biblically informed, wise decision. Well, God's word is very clear. Once we're in covenant, we need to stay in covenant. We are not a people who break covenant cause we model our marriages after God's covenant with us. A covenant means a promise so strong that it shouldn't be broken. And that is the point of covenant. That's the point of marriage. So God does have encouragement for women in those places. Saying you can win your husband over. Without a word, just by your pure conduct, by loving God serving God, you're not. You're not just in it for your husband. You're staying faithful because you're faithful to God. And that's the bigger picture. You're staying faithful to the Lord. So you're in that covenant now. Of course. Another side note. I feel there's got to be like a. Side notes is if it's an abusive relationship then obviously you need to seek counsel. You need to get to safety. We encourage you in any relationship to seek wise godly counsel. Get help, don't just manage it by yourself. You need input. And of course, if there's any physical abuse at all, even emotional abuse, we know that can get very extreme. You need to. Get safe. In order to get help, and of course we would love nothing more than every relationship to be restored with both people loving God and pursuing him. 1st but we know that doesn't always happen and so you need to seek help and wisdom and biblical counsel in that. So those are just a few side things that I wanted to say, but I'll let you keep going.

Yeah, you can. Well, and this has been a website that's been. Super helpful. If you go to biblicalcounseling.com or.org, remember biblicalcounseling.com or.org, we'll link up below that I am seeing a counselor for. Just like personal things and my younger sister Rebecca is seeing a counselor through this network. So if you go to biblical counseling, look that up. I'm willing to go below. That would be a great place to start, even if you're like, you know. You know my even if I'm just like dating or I'm single or I'm married and I'm just struggling or I have questions, there are counselors. All over the. World and if you can't find one in your area, you can always zoom or, you know, like talk through video or whatever with one of them. A lot of them are actually free as a ministry. The one I'm seeing is actually free, the one my sister Rebecca is seeing is actually free. So it's. Really incredible and incredible ministry and I would really encourage you to seek out that help because I know the problem is like, well, I don't have a mentor. I don't know where to go, you know, start with your church, try to find someone there, ask for help, talk to a pastor, ask for where you can go. But if you need something today, you can reach out literally today. So that's just a huge, huge resource. OK, so back to settling back to like specifically what to look for. I remember I was at.

Yeah, I think everybody wants to hear from you. Like, what was your story?

Well, yeah. So I was at a dinner with, like, a bunch of single girls. Actually, we were kind of hosting this dinner, and they were all asking, like, So what specifically were, like the red flags in your relationship? Don't be vague. And they wanted to know because they were like, yes, wanting to know for themselves or for just like, what to look for. So I was in multiple relationships before, not at the same time, individually. 4 You know marrying Dave, I got married. 30 but I think in my mid 20s I started to get to this point of just feeling really like desperate, I guess. I mean, I talk, I talk a lot about my single journey and a lot about the struggles that I dealt with and how I found like hope and freedom in that area in our book love to find embracing God's vision for lasting love and satisfying relationships. So I actually wrote 2 chapters. I think they're chapter 7:00 and 8:00. And they're all on singleness, all on you know, spotting the lies and finding freedom thriving. And so you can grab that book, and it would be so encouraging. So yeah, definitely check that out. But I this relationship particularly was in my, like, early late 20, mid 20s. I can't really remember exactly, but it went on for about two years on and off, and it was just such. Looking back, it's like what was I thinking, you know? But I I will say my fear in the relationship and This is why I stayed in this, why I entered the relationship and This is why I stayed in the relationship. And you may. To this I was afraid of the future and I didn't want to be in a position where I didn't have someone that I was with and that my future was unknown like I might be single forever. I didn't want to be in that place. I didn't want to to imagine a future of singleness, and I would rather in that moment I was I would rather settle and stay in this romantic relationship. Even though I knew I was compromised. Playing over my fear of like. What will my? Life be I'm gonna be 80 rocking alone. In a rocking chair, you. Know. And so because that's what.

All 80 year olds do.

Yeah, that's all. What 80 year olds do and they're. Just no, it's like. I just had. This super yeah, unrealistic fear of just how miserable life would be if I were single and I just thought, like, this is the last boat out. Like, if I don't marry him, like I'm probably never gonna get married. Like, what a terrible way. Like, God doesn't work on that like that. Well, there she goes. Last one out. Like, if you don't marry him, you're done, sister like, no. And ultimately marriage isn't the goal. You don't break up with someone. Because you, you're like, well, I'm gonna find the next one. No, you follow God and honor him and live for him. Because that's what we were created for. And that's where we find purpose in life. And, you know, I can tell you that I was so much more satisfied, so much more content, so much more joy filled after I got out of that relationship and was completely single and came to grips with the fact that I may never get married way more than I was in that relationship. So for me.

And why was that? Like, why were you so much? I'm sure some girls are like, wait, how could you be? More satisfied? Not in a relation, yeah.

Because in the relationship that I was in, it was very confusing because one he came very highly recommended by like pastors and people that were like like I remember one a very well respected man basically came up to me and was telling. Me like, oh, you're so lucky. To be with him. And it was like, wow, you know, and all this stuff deep in my heart, I was like. Well, I'm not 100% sure about. But you know when you hear people talk? Yeah. So highly about someone. And they come like, wow, this person is just like. 9:50 you're like, well, it must be a 9:50, you know. And that can be confusing when sometimes we get a really good recommendation. I mean, that's how it was with you and that guy. He came very highly recommended. So although you want to find someone who does come highly recommended, you can't take that as the only approval because they may not. They weren't in, you know, romantic relationship with that person. They have it spent the amount of time that you're going to spend. So you still have to use a lot of wisdom and a lot of caution.

Yeah. Oh, yeah.

Huge red flags for me initially were exactly like you like from the beginning. A lot of promises, a lot of good intentions with extremely slim follow through like I am talking. Usually any but every time it was like ohh. Such good intentions such hyping up what he was gonna do, but then it would just be weeks and weeks and weeks on end in so many areas and just meaningless areas. Like why do you tell me you're gonna do all these great things or promise these great things and then not follow through. So that was just very frustrating. You know, when you're in a relationship where even if it's just like. I mean, it sounds silly, but it's like even if. It's just, you know. They're going to be there at this time or they're. Going to do. This specific thing, or they're going to be at a certain place and then you find out later they weren't at that place. They didn't do that thing. It just really starts to make you wonder like, OK, if they said they were gonna be at that coffee shop and then they didn't go there like, it just starts to kind of make you wonder if you can trust them, you know, until being in a relationship where you're struggling to trust the person. It's hard, you know. And so that was like right away, just like, OK, I'm not so sure about this. Like, why does he, you know, continue continue, continue to do this in the beginning, I would say a relationship was very honoring like you sexually wise. I felt like he was really putting a good foot forward. But as the relationship went on, I don't know. I think he was just getting more desperate and so basic. Basically, the the thing that broke the whole relationship was just he just made some advances towards me. I don't know what I would get to very specific, you know, obviously, but it was just very inappropriate and I think that if I had stayed in the relationship any longer, I think he really would have like, tried to find an opportunity. I don't even know. Like it wasn't they. Yeah. And just not.

Just for moral compromise. More more.

And I wasn't wanting it though, you know, like and I would be the one to tell him. Like, I don't like this. I don't want this. You know, we need to get accountability or we need to get help or whatever. And then. Just, you know, like it it just seemed that there was regret over me not liking that, not so much truly over the sin. And so that was really hard and really draining. And so when that final like him, just like, make him move towards me, that I really didn't want when that happened, I was just like, I can't do this anymore. And so later looking back. People that I had known were sharing with me facts about him, things that he had told me he had done or that were true about him, and later people had told me, like, I've actually, that's not true. He never did that or he didn't have that specific thing that he said. And so it was just.

Like good things or bad.

Like I don't want. To be specific, specific.

No, not Smith, but legist.

Say that I. Tell you like this is a totally not the example, but say I tell you like, hey, I went on a trip to New York and it was really amazing. And then like a few weeks later you find out I never went to New York. OK. So just statements to impress or to act like. Wow. I've.

Got this great resume of like experiences or whatever, OK.

Yeah, it's totally. And so I found out some of those things during the relationship and then later found out really big things that it's like, why would you? Make that up.

The lying.

Like, yeah, like, why would you tell someone that? And so those sorts of things like those aren't things just to like brush over, you know, or even things that were really important to me, like even spiritually. Like, theologically, I remember there were a few topics that like, hey, it'd be really cool if we could kind of, like, study these together or try to get on the same page because this is a big deal to me. And I just remember that being like, oh, are you kidding? That would. That's just so big. Like I could never study. I could never learn about that. Like, oh, why, you know, that's just too much to ask, basically. And it was like, wow, like, OK, what if there's something like when we're raising kids one day where I wanna know, like, OK, should we, you know, I don't know. What if we're discussing baptism like, what it looks like and you're just like, oh, that's true. Why we can't talk. You know, that's too big. Whatever. It's. Like you wanna be with someone where you feel like you can. Really. I don't know. Dig spiritually and you know, really pursue the things that are on your heart. So, like sexually. It was an issue spiritually, was an issue. And then, you know what I thought was just like maybe like him having good intentions that he couldn't follow through with later finding out. Wow. No, there were just a lot of straight up lies. And I think trust is one of the most important things in a relationship. And so even now, it's like, I don't even know who exactly he was and what else was going on that I didn't know about. And so you want. To be with someone where you truly believe that you can trust them and that you don't have to wonder behind the scenes what they're doing and where they're going and who. Talking to you, you want a man where you know that he wants to honor the Lord for himself. He doesn't just want to honor you like you need someone who has a higher authority, and he really cares about honoring the Lord. Doesn't just say it, but actually follows through with it. You know, one of the things that later on when I got together with Dave, that I really appreciated about him. Is the fact that I could really tell like you know, on his own, he had sought out mentorship on his own. He pursued really good, godly friendships with guys on his own. He chose. Be involved in church on his own. He chose to read his Bible and consistently work through that like on his own. He would offer information that I didn't even know I should ask about, but that he would share openly. And so those sorts of things just develop a level of trust. Yeah, where you know, they're not gonna be perfect. But I know that they are seeking seeking the Lord for themselves and even. Direction, even if the life is hard, or even if I'm not here, I know that he wants to honor God because he wants to honor God and not just because he wants to get the girl first. So those are just a few of our experiences. But I can tell you for both of us, we we had and I think it's probably the Holy Spirit like you know. Yeah, I don't even know exactly how that works. You know, like the Holy Spirit can be confusing to me. Like, how does all that work? But just, you know, when people are telling you, like, hey, this isn't a good decision when you have that, like, just that knowing? Like, I don't know, you know, like, take that stuff seriously, you know, like. Pursue counselors outside of yourself to. Help you share open. And honestly, I know with so many relationships. Yeah. And I've seen this first hand where I've mentored girls and I they've, you know, they've shared some of the issues in the relationship. And then after it ends, they open up about all these other issues that they were too embarrassed to share about. So I encourage you, don't be too embarrassed. Find a trusted counselor and share. Share the truth about it. Say, this is it's really this bad. Like I know you think it's only this bad, but here's how bad it actually is, he said. This don't just give him the benefit of the doubt with a trusted mentor, give the raw, honest truth and then she'll be able to tell you like, yeah, that actually is a big deal or that's not a big deal. And if she doesn't know, you know, ask her like, hey, can we find someone else to talk to so we can really dig in. This, but I encourage you don't keep things secret. Don't assume the best about it. Like really, if you have those red flags you're sensing or you're seeing, be open about them. Now. We're gonna dig into love to find, and we're gonna share with you. We have a specific chapter all about red flags, and we're going to share a few of those with you to help you be able to discern, you know, like we don't. Want to make? A problem out of a relationship. That's a good one, you know. And so that's why you need mentors. You need people who are looking into your life. We don't want you freaking out and go. Maybe my relationship's a disaster. It genuinely is a really good one. Cause. Yeah, great men out there. And you could be in a genuinely good relationship, but we want to read a few things that. Our red flags to look for, so these will help you to discern, OK, maybe is there an issue? Or is there?

Not yeah. And where we see in scripture like this idea of counsel, I just want to read a few quick scriptures because I and Bethany, I do not think that we would have had the guts and courage to end our relationships. It is really hard when you're in it without wise godly people not only speaking. Truth into our lives, but surrounding us and helping us on the other side. We all know that going through breaks is real. Hard and it's really hard to be alone through that process. Scripture talks about bearing one another's burdens. I think a hard breakup is definitely a burden, and we need the help of our Christian family to support us, whether it's our actual family, our parents or siblings, or our Christian community within our church, our sisters in Christ, we need people to help us think straight, to get out of our bubble. Help us navigate the pain on the other side. You know, people talk about rebounding to help us not make foolish decisions because of the heartbreak and the grief that we're going through trying to Band-Aid our pain. But really, people who can help us dig into scripture and find true. Through biblical healing. And so we see these warnings and this exhortation in Scripture to seek counsel. Proverbs 1215 says the way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice, and this can be a wise woman. We can just insert ourselves. A wise woman listens to advice. And so we all have choices. To make one, we need to be the ones inviting counsel, not just getting in our own bubble in our own relationship and kind of isolating ourselves. That's easy to do like, you know, don't mess with me. Don't talk about what I'm doing. Like I'm independent. The culture really encourages us to be independent. To just kind of get on our. Island and do. Our thing we need to be the ones godly women will go pursue wisdom and counsel. Don't just wait for someone to come after you. Invite people in, find godly couples and say hey, can we meet with you? Can you provide accountability in these specific ways? If you see anything concerning it, can you speak that into our lives? We want to hear. Invite them over for dinner, go to their house for dinner, have them pray for you. Ask them if they'll pray for God's wisdom on your relationship on a weekly basis. Like, don't just be passive about this. Be intentional. Pursue wisdom. Proverbs 11/14 also says where there is no guidance a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety and this is talking more about larger like kingdoms and large people groups. But I think we can make this personal where there is no guidance, we will fall, right? But in an abundance of counselors, there is safety. And I just love that word safety. And you know, it brings to mind like, picture my husband's acting. I love watching. Like animal store like like National Park, like documentaries and like Planet Earth and Things where you're learning about God's creation. I love that. And you know the picture that always comes to mind is like the cheetah chasing the head of Gazelle and like the one gazelle that gets away that strays from the pack. It's like the one that the cheetah goes after. Right. And so this person is saying the same thing, like, if you stray from the body of Christ. If you isolate yourself, if you get on your island and you're not surrounding yourself by the safety of Christian godly community. And putting yourself in the midst of vice counselors, then there is no safety. You're the same as that Gazelle who is broken away from the pack and the enemy. Temptations, lies. I mean, you're vulnerable. You're not safe. And so that is exactly what Proverbs 11/14 is warning against. Stay within community. Don't isolate yourself. There is safety when there is wise. Counsel and guidance, so just some. Exhortation there for you. Now let's jump into these red. Flags. This is again, it's pulled from love to find. Chapter 15 is literally titled 10 red flags to look for in a relationship. I'm going to fly through some of these. Bethany is gonna fly, fly through some of these. I don't know. Have we done a podcast episode specifically on all of these red? Flags I can't remember I.

Don't think we.

Should sometimes like really digging into them because I know this is again just going to be an overview. This is just to give you like we've already given you a lot to think about, and this episode, I hope you're not too overwhelmed again, grabbing a copy of love define will give you time to process. There's a study guide at the end of every chapter. It's a great book if you are a married woman, but you have a single friend or a friend in a relationship, you're wondering how to speak truth into her life. This would be a great book to walk through together. So these red flags will just give you more of a vision of an idea of what sort of things could be problematic in your relationship or the relationship of someone you love. Number one, this is about the guy Red Flag number one. He has a shallow relationship with God. So. He says he talks the big talk. Maybe he goes to church. He seems committed. He's in small group, whatever. Or maybe he's not. Maybe he's not doing any of those those things, but talks about like he wants to. He talks about the word but never reads it like is his relationship with God really surface? He really shallow. Is it more talk than walk? Those are the things that you really want to be looking for. Is again you want to marry a man who is going to be a godly leader who's going to be a man of prayer, a man who cares for you spiritually, who wants to help you grow spiritually, right? Who's pulling you forward? Not someone who is constantly dragging you down. And that takes us into red flag. #2HE pulls you down spiritually. So not only does he have a shallow relationship. But he's actually pulling you down spiritually, so rather than pushing you forward. Loving you, challenging you in your walk with Christ, encouraging you in the word or in prayer. He's actually pulling you down. You find yourself drifting further and further away from God as a result of being in a relationship with this man that would definitely be a red flag #3 red flag #3. He's stuck in habitual sin. So again, we're not talking about perfection. Direction. Are there sins and habitual means a sin that's not just like a one time occurrence here and there, but something that's happening regularly where he's not? He has not found freedom, he's in \*\*\*\*\*\*\*. He is trapped in this and there is not a path. A freedom that he's walking. So, for example, \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* addiction, a habitual sin, he has not broken free from other forms of lust, sexual sin, anger, rage, alcohol or drug addiction, abuse, gluttony. I mean, they're those are just a few of the types of habitual sins that the enemy is always trying to trap us in. In each of our various weaknesses. But really evaluating are their habitual sins that he is trapped in and does not have a pattern of freedom that would definitely be a red flag, red flag, #4HE pressures you to compromise sexually we talked about. This already in each of our own stories, but you feel that regular pressure, and it might even be always presented in a positive way like I do this because I love you. I want to be close to you. I care for you. You know, I just I long for intimacy with you. Like, OK, that sounds really good on the surface. But the fact of the matter is you're not married, you're not married. You're not in covenant, you're not in that committed marital covenant relationship where sexual pleasure and intimacy is a celebration. Of your bond and your Union, that's not your reality yet. And so although it might be presented as this wonderful, beautiful thing, and you might even find yourself obviously enjoying it, wanting it as well, it's not the right time and place for that. And so God actually calls that sin right when we are taking advantage of things that are reserved for marriage only. And so if you find him regularly pressuring you. And even maybe guilting you making you feel bad for things where he's trying to compromise sexually? That is definitely a red flag. #5 he's rushing the relationship now. This one. What we mean by this is that. He is. He's just rushing. He's just trying to get to the next thing. I definitely felt that in my relationship we were together. I think a total of eight months. But from the beginning it to me it always felt like he was rushing us to the point of engagement. Just rushing to get married, wanting to rush past important things, important conversations, important questions, even like pre engagement. Counseling. Just not wanting to take the time to seek wisdom, to pursue wisdom, to read through solid books together, dig through really helpful questions together. He didn't want that. He was just rushing, rushing, rushing, and that I think could be a red. Flag for you to consider. We are gonna talk about a freebie at the end. I'm actually gonna tell. You about it now, but it's something you've had to talk about, probably. It's 100 and. 36 questions to help in a romantic relationship, so it's a guide of 136 questions where you can dig in in your relationship, different categories to help you just have conversations about. Very important topics, whether it's like spiritual conversations, future goals, work, sexual beliefs like all sorts of things. This guide will help you navigate these questions in a really intentional way in your relationship, and it's a free PDF download at girlfriend.com/questions.

Girlfriend.com/questions we'll mention it again at the end, but I just wanted to give it a little plug because that is a really valuable resource. OK, next red flag is that wise people in your life don't support the relationship. I think this is a huge one, especially people you love. You trust people you've invited into your relationship. They are like saying, hey, we see issues. See problems taking those concerns seriously, I think is very important and if you. Like, OK, I think there might be ulterior motives. Reach out to someone who is not emotionally attached to at all. Maybe like your pastor's wife, or really godly, wise woman and say, hey, here's what I'm hearing. Maybe even together with you and these other people get together with this person who's not emotionally attached to at all and get another bit of input. Because sometimes I know if you're like, it's my parents and they just, you know, like they just want me to be at home forever or whatever, you know, you can. You can reach out and together get advice from someone who's not emotionally attached, but take those concerns seriously, I think. God gives us wise people in our life to to provide that that extra insight, you know, we're emotionally involved. We're infatuated, all of that sort of stuff. It can be very hard to see. So having people who are not us speaking to our relationship is helpful. Obviously you are the one that needs to make the decision, yes or no because you are the one that ultimately would spend your life with them. So I think it's very important that you make that decision. But set up a pattern in your life of listening to wise counsel. The next red flag to look for. There is that. He has very few spiritual convictions, so he's just kind of like I I don't really care. I mean should, should you? Read the Bible regularly. I mean it's it's give or take, do you think church is really important? I mean I go but you know he just has a very shallow understanding of who God is. He doesn't, really. Pursue deeper, deeper wisdom and deeper knowledge of who God is. He doesn't pursue what God speaks of in his. Word he's just. Kind of like give or take goes with. Flow he just jumps on to all of your convictions like, oh, that sounds good. I'll follow you like. No. You want a man who's pursuing the Lord for himself? Who's pursuing conviction for himself? Because you know, when push comes to shove, he's going to stand on that and he's going to believe on that. So you want to know, OK, what does he think about divorce? What does he think about, you know, the sex outside of marriage? What does he think about children? What does he? Does he have convictions about these things? And it's OK if he hasn't thought about him. But is he willing to think about him? Does he want to think? About these things, I think that's important. Another red flag is that he doesn't keep his word. Chris and I have unpacked that very thoroughly about lying, about not following through about saying that they're gonna do something and they're not. I think that's really important, you know, really. A red flag. I think it's just something to keep an eye on, something to be open about. And like I said, don't have a bunch of those moments in your mind that you're not willing to share with someone and you're only giving them the tip of the iceberg when really they. A lot more issues under the surface. Be honest about the whole iceberg and share about the soul of the relationship. Don't wait until after our relationship ends or after you get married. Be like actually there are 1,000,000 more issues I just didn't share, like no be on. This, and even if you're not sure like, well, I'm just not sure. Share that with a godly counselor, another red flag. This is huge, especially in our day and age of media of online dating of everything like that is that he wants to keep the relationship a secret. Now I get like we don't wanna announce on, you know, social media like we're dating. Like, I get that. But like, he doesn't want your parents to know he doesn't want your friends to know he doesn't want. His family to know. I think that if there isn't this ongoing pattern of secrecy and of not wanting people to know, I mean. Sadly, you know, we have seen multiple instances with friends through online dating where they met someone and they had no idea that this person was either married or had a different relationship going on. And you don't want to be fearful, but you want to be wise. So if you see a red flag of him wanting to, you know, walk in secrecy and not wanting people to know being very odd about steps that he's taking or where he's willing to meet or who he's willing to tell. That's a red flag. You need to seek wisdom on it. Another red flag. The last one we're gonna talk about today is that he is obsessed. Himself, you know, it's like they're just, they're obsessed with maybe their body. They're obsessed with how they look, you know? And and you're just they're they're obsessed with, you know, me, me, me or what I'm doing. And you know, my my plans my and they get frustrated. I think that's kind of what we shared about Kristen's relationship. You know he just got very it was just a self-centered. That got easily bothered, easily irritated, easily frustrated, and and it was just an ongoing habit. It wasn't just like a hard day, you know, it was like this is kind of a pattern. That's very concerning because as humans, as Christians made in, you know, as humans made them image of God as people have trusted in Christ as our savior, we should be ultimately about Christ. Christ came not to be served, but to serve. That should be our heart and our motivation. So a man who is not willing to live others focused Christ centered. I'm truly in and out in the small areas of life. I think is a red flag, so those are a lot to think about. That's a lot of. Info if you really wanna take a deep dive again, please grab a copy of love to find. You can click the link below, go to our website girl to find.com or anywhere books are. Sold you can. Listen to the audio or to actually read the hard copy, get a PDF, download whatever you need, but I really encourage you to take that seriously, and if you're in a relationship and you're like I'm not exactly sure, I think he's a good guy. I'm not exactly sure where things stand. Grab our free download 136 questions to ask in a romantic relationship because this will help bring up red flags if there are any, and I know I've heard people say marriage counselors are marriage counselor for Dave and I said. You know, my job is to if there's anything that needs to come up, a reason you should not get married. That's my goal. So it's not that you're we're trying to break you up, but if there is a reason that you should not be in a relationship, we want you to find that out. And the guide 136 questions will help you do that. You can get that free guide at girldefine.com/questionsand. Please, please, please. Please leave us a 5 star review. This podcast does not spread itself. You have got to you have got to help spread the word every single time you listen. Tap that five star review if you're on Apple Podcast, that helps us so much. And if there's something specific that helps you, please leave a written review. We we. Those we are so encouraged by them and others. Read them and it helps them to know what this podcast is all about and that others appreciate it. This has been such a great conversation. We hope you feel equipped and have the wisdom you need to take those steps next steps in your relationship or future relationship. Alright girl, we will see you next week.